



## **TOWN OF STOWE PLANNING COMMISSION Meeting Minutes March 20, 2023**

The Town of Stowe Planning Commission held a meeting on **Monday March 20, 2023**, starting at 5:30 p.m. The meeting was held at the Stowe Town Office with remote participation available via Zoom. The meeting began at 5:30 pm.

Members present included Mila Lonetto, Hope Sullivan, Bob Davison, Brian Hamor, Neil Percy. Also present was Bruce Nourjian, Sarah McShane (staff), and Ken Belliveau (planning consultant).

### **Review Prior Meeting Minutes [03/06/2023]**

On a motion by B.Davison, seconded by H.Sullivan, the meeting minutes from the prior meeting were approved as submitted. The motion passed.

### **Adjustments to the Agenda & Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items**

Bruce Nourjian inquired about dimensional requirements and why the bylaws were amended to remove time share ownership(s) were from the LVC. Chair Lonetto responded since time shares were no longer common the Planning Commission recommended that it be removed as part of the most recent zoning amendments approved by the Selectboard last summer. Staff added that fractional ownerships are classified as multi-family dwellings regardless of the number of owners. Chair Lonetto explained the purpose of the meeting and discussion around dimensional requirements in the LVC district.

### **Continued Discussion- Bylaw Modernization Grant**

Planning Consultant Ken Belliveau was present and provided an overview of dimensional requirements in the LVC district, goals for the district, and possible amendments to better support housing and remove regulatory barriers. Members reviewed current building coverage, lot width, lot area, setback requirements, etc. K.Belliveau reviewed the goals, vision, and purpose of the district including supporting a mixed use development pattern. He asked the Commission to consider whether there are impediments to the development of housing in this area.

### **VISON AND GOALS FOR STOWE LOWER VILLAGE**

- Maintain the walkable, dense, village feel, mixed use development pattern
- Pedestrian scale
- Reduce/eliminate need to drive within the village
- Provide for both residential and commercial uses
- Maintain as aesthetic qualities as a gateway to Stowe village

### **PURPOSE OF THE DISTRICT**

The purpose of Lower Village Commercial District is to promote the sound economic development of Stowe, to carry out the objective of the Stowe Town Plan, to maintain some of the areas adjacent to Stowe Village as centers of community activity and to encourage the best use of land.

### **DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS**

What are Dimensional Standards or Requirements? Dimensional standards are requirements limiting the physical size, bulk, location, and spacing of buildings. These include:

- Minimum Lot Width (frontage) and Minimum Lot Area (size)
- Maximum Building Height

- Maximum Building Coverage and / or Lot Coverage
- Minimum Setbacks from property lines

Why are they important?

- Enable or restrict what building types are possible or allowed
- Create a visual “rhythm” of building locations and size
- Define the physical character of the area

### LVC Dimensional Standards and Ideas

	Current Standards	Ideas to Consider
<b>Lot Width</b>	125 ft.	100 ft.
<b>Lot Area</b>	20,000 sq. ft. Min	No Change
<b>Building Height</b>	28 and 35 ft	Require Multi-Stories Pitched Roofs Recessed/Articulated Upper Floors
<b>Building Coverage</b>	20%	Eliminate or Increase the %
<b>Lot Coverage</b>	Not Used	Require all parking on-site, Encourage parking to the rear of buildings Require landscaping or pedestrian walkways in setbacks
<b>Setbacks</b>	10 ft. all sides	Consider 5 ft. Build -To Line along streets Articulated entryways

K.Belliveau suggested that members look at the existing development pattern on the ground and consider whether the current regulations support the existing development pattern.

Members discussed opportunities to encourage shared parking; concerns about potential “bulky” buildings; the desire for buildings to contain pitched roofs, articulated entrances, design details; evaluating the waiver criteria in the historic district; the LVC pattern of single-use buildings; requiring a minimum of two stories and mixed-uses; clear language requiring parking on the sides and rear; opportunities to reduce the auto-centric feel of the area; restrictions on state highways; addressing nonconforming parking; improve existing landscaping and screening requirements; increased building height for pitched roofs, etc. Following discussion, the Commission agreed on the following:

- Reduce the lot width to 100 ft.
- No change to existing lot area requirement of 20,000 sf.
- Require new buildings to contain a minimum of two stories. Allow three stories if the building contains x, y, z (additional discussion required to define increased building height parameters;

initial discussion included allowing three stories if the building has an increased setback, provides year round housing, meets architectural standards; contains a pitched roof.)

- Mixed opinions on eliminating building coverage; no decision was made. The Commission would like to see how this dimensional requirement interacts with landscaping and parking requirements.
- Setbacks remain at 10 ft.
- Improve existing site plan review standards (landscaping, location of parking/require in the rear/sides/underneath/add nonconforming site plan elements, etc.)

During the next meeting the Commission will continue discussion and include density, examples of how existing dimensional requirements are applied during site plan review, etc. B.Hamor mentioned that Jackson, WY has new regulations pertaining to open space that might be worth looking at.

### **Updates/Correspondence/Other Business**

Chair Lonetto asked B.Davison to draft a recognition of Chuck Baraw's long time service to the Commission and community. Bruce Nourjian mentioned Ted Teffner's involvement in the Mayo Farm Management Plan and the upcoming evaluation of the easement. He suggested that it may be an opportunity to provide affordable housing. The next regular meeting is scheduled for April 3rd.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah McShane, Planning & Zoning Director